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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**MEA ANNOUNCES GAME CHANGER ENERGY GRANTS**

*The Maryland Energy Administration announces grants for innovative renewable projects through its Game Changer program.*

**ANNAPOLIS, MD (June 19, 2014)** - Today, the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) announced grant awards for game changing renewable energy projects that advance the market for renewable energy in Maryland. This year's projects represent significant opportunities for improved residential renewable energy approaches in the State, reflecting industry interest in the potential for smaller, more localized generation.

MEA Director Abigail Ross Hopper commended the projects, stating "meeting Maryland's ambitious renewable energy and greenhouse gas goals means continuing to focus on cutting edge renewables and working with state residents to overcome financial and technical barriers. Game Changers projects do this by streamlining installation, and combining solar systems with battery backup storage while allowing homeowners to make full use of their systems during grid outages."

MEA, the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, and the Maryland Clean Energy Center evaluated all project submissions based on energy production, cost-effectiveness, market potential, and viability. Funding for the program is provided by the Strategic Energy Investment Fund, which comes from public auctions of carbon credits through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative. More information on the projects receiving awards is below:

**Astrum Solar: Pioneering Residential Energy Storage** was awarded \$250,000. Astrum will implement an equipment leasing arrangement for up to 25 residential solar photovoltaic systems with backup battery storage. MEA's grant will lower the cost of battery backup. This will make a leasing viable, and allow Astrum to sell battery services into the PJM's frequency regulation market, likely reducing the cost of battery backup power. The solar plus battery backup will give homeowners greater control over energy generation and use, and represents the leading edge of the market.

**Infinite Invention: Plug and Play Solar for Maryland Homes** was awarded \$79,910. Infinite Invention will use its innovative ConnectDER device at ten Maryland households to streamline residential solar photovoltaic system connection to the electric grid, without having to enter the household. This inventive technology uses a specialized load side connection behind the utility meter to reduce installation times and the significant costs associated with residential solar.

For more information about this initiative, please visit: <http://energy.maryland.gov/Business/gamechanger/>

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*The mission of the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) is to promote affordable, reliable, clean energy. MEA's programs and policies help lower energy bills, fuel the creation of green collar jobs, address environmental and climate impacts, and promote energy independence.*